University of Edinburgh

1. Job Details
Job title: Lothian Health Services Deputy Archivist
School/Support Department: IS/Library, Museums and Galleries
Unit: Lothian Health Services Archive (LHSA)/Collections
Line manager: Lothian Health Services Archivist

2. Job Purpose
To assist in the management and administration of LHSA collections and services. To participate in the shared work of the Division. To deputise for the LHS Archivist as required. This 1.0 FTE open-ended job has an organisational and administrative focus.

3. Main Responsibilities

1. Specific organisational and administrative tasks, such as formulation of policies and procedures, recruitment and supervision of new staff, management of repository space, maintenance of the LHSA website, procurement, and liaison with support staff, in order to support the work of the LHS Archivist. 40

2. Accession, arrange, list, and catalogue new material and existing holdings to accepted archival standards, and to investigate new technologies for delivery of catalogue descriptions and digital substitutes, so that they are adequately managed and accessible to archive users. 20

3. Assist in the development of Data Protection and Freedom of Information policies, including liaison where relevant with NHS Lothian staff, in order to ensure full compliance with relevant legislation. 15

4. Attend a variety of internal and external groups and working parties, to represent LHSA and/or Scottish health archives in general and to provide an expert opinion. 10

5. Assist with enquiries from members of the University, NHS and public as required, in order to provide a high quality enquiry and research support service in conformity with relevant legislation and NHS confidentiality guidelines. 10

6. Provide, on a rota basis with other Special Collections staff, a Support Desk service to users, in order to provide information and to supervise use of the material. 5

4. Planning and Organising
The job holder reports directly to the LHS Archivist, who holds responsibility for the LHSA collections and contributes to their strategic development, plus control and direction of main policies and procedures. The programme of work is set in part by the job holder, and by the LHS Archivist in consultation with the job holder.

The work programme is also represented in and monitored via the annual LHSA work plan, which is reviewed regularly at the LHSA staff team meeting to assess progress against set objectives and targets. The LHSA annual work plan forms part of the annual work plan for Collections Division. Much of the work arises in response to NHS and University demand.

The job holder supervises project, fixed-term and casual staff as required, and has input into the work of the Assistant Archivists.

5. Problem Solving
Examples include:
• Ensuring that the necessary work of the archive can be satisfactorily achieved with limited staffing resource.
• Managing the storage space in the repository effectively so that a) the limited space available is used to the best advantage, and b) to ensure that archival material is adequately protected in the environmental conditions available.
• Making archival holdings and information about them available to users who are unable to come to the Archive in person.

Problems are solved independently and in consultation with the LHS Archivist where necessary, following existing local policies and professional guidelines.
6. Decision Making
Examples include:

- Prioritisation of collections for cataloguing.
- Recruitment of short-term staff for particular projects or pieces of work.
- Appraisal and disposal where required of archival material.

Decisions are reached independently or in consultation with the LHS Archivist as required, in line with local policies and professional guidelines.

7. Key Contacts/Relationships

Internal
LHSA staff; other colleagues in Collections Division and the Main Library.

University
Records Management Section; all Colleges but particularly MVM and HSS, both staff and students.

NHS
Medical Records and clinical departments; Lothian NHS Board and other administrative departments.

External
Other archival services; suppliers and contractors; staff and students of other academic institutions and members of the public.

Such communication may be both on an informal and a formal basis, whether in person, through written communication or by phone.

8. Knowledge, Skills and Experience Needed for the Job

A good honours degree and a postgraduate qualification in archival administration are essential, as are good IT and communication skills. The job holder should have at least two years’ experience of working in archives, preferably with some supervisory experience. The job holder should also have a thorough understanding of current professional best practice, such as cataloguing standards, storage of archival material and digital technologies. The job holder must be self-motivated, with good problem-solving and time management skills, as well as tact, persuasiveness and assertiveness. An interest in the history of medicine and knowledge of the NHS in Scotland are desirable.

9. Dimensions

Collection size: c3,000 linear metres, including artefacts and images as well as archival NHS administrative and medical records.

Indicative usage 2004: 266 reading room visits, 1097 external enquiries, 3,115 record productions; average 4,750 website “hits” per month (5,803 in December 2005).

The job holder works in a team of four core staff, with close relationships with the wider Collections Division team.

10. Job Context and any other relevant information

LHSA is an area-wide, non-SHEFC funded, cross-sectoral organisation founded jointly in 1980 by LNHSB and UE, with support from the National Archives of Scotland. It moved to the Library in 1988. It is the largest and, arguably, the leading NHS health archive in the UK. A significant proportion of its administrative, and especially clinical case note holdings, are nationally important historical documents. Some collections are internationally important (e.g. those relating to the Royal Infirmary and the Edinburgh HIV-AIDS epidemic during the 1980s and 1990s). It has a UK-wide reputation for the preservation and digitisation of archival case notes and for supporting and contributing to project-based academic research.

The job carries high levels of responsibility as the job holder is effectively responsible for the day-to-day running of the Archive. This job is externally funded by the NHS, with which there is a close relationship. The job holder needs to be mindful at all times of the needs of the NHS as well as of the University, and also that the continuation of the budget is dependent on the service that LHSA provides.